

Sies + Höke Galerie

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Press release

FORT: About Blank

4 September – 16 October 2015, Opening: Friday, 4 September 6-10 pm

Tying in with DC Open, Sies + Höke is pleased to present the artist duo FORT's inaugural solo exhibition at the gallery.

Alberta Niemann and Jenny Kropp, aka FORT, stage objects, spaces and performative situations to complex near-replicas of everyday life. Their strategy consists of appropriating the existing, adding their own and disturbing the supposedly familiar with strange elements. In FORT's installations, viewers transform to involuntary extras in a scene serving to make visible the mechanisms of our consumer society and the art market.

In their Solo show *About Blank*, FORT investigate the notion of emptiness. An entrance to what looks like closed shop premises is located on the ground floor gallery's front wall. An electrical box titled "Trio" is placed in front of the window, bearing a cigarette butt (hand-rolled), the remainder of an almost finished ice cream cone and a small silver ball made from crumpled gum wrappers, all side by side. The arrangement as such was found and retrieved by Kropp and Niemann one night during an exhibition set-up in Cologne.

The lower ground floor installation suggests an abandoned shopping mall, showing different windows that are either empty or closed, denying insight to their interior. Final traces and residues on the windows combine to tell a new story.

The works shown in this exhibition are based on chance observations by the artists, who detach objects from their context because they appear lonely, lost or peculiar. As so often with FORT, an atmosphere of abandonment is generated. Frequently, a sense of eeriness arises in the seemingly familiar and the things that daily surround us appear in a different light.

FORT consists of artists Alberta Niemann (1982) and Jenny Kropp (*1978). They have been creating objects, installations, performances and video installations since 2008 (until 2013 together with Anna Jandt *1980). The artists live and work in Berlin. Recent solo exhibitions include *The Daily Sun*, arthothek, Cologne (2015); *SHIFT*, Kestnergesellschaft, Hannover (2015); *Dream of Capri*, CAPRI, Düsseldorf (2014); *Morgen letzter Tag*, Kunsthau Dresden (2013) and *One in a Million*, Galerie Thoman, Vienna (2013). Recent group shows include *Letztes Jahr in Marienbad. Ein Film als Kunstwerk*, Kunsthalle Bremen (2015); *Im Inneren der Stadt*, GAK Gesellschaft für aktuelle Kunst Bremen (2015); *Krankheit als Metapher*, Kunsthau, Hamburg (2014); *Fremd & Eigen*, Galerie im Taxispalais, Innsbruck (2013); *Risc Society*, MoCA Museum of Contemporary Art Taipeh (2013) and *One On One*, KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2012).

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